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# THE WHEAT POOLS

## In Relation to Rural Community Life In Western Canada

An account of some of the ways  
in which the Wheat Pools have  
endeavored to assist the prairie  
community toward a happier  
and fuller manner of living.



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Published by THE CANADIAN WHEAT POOLS  
October, 1935



633-11038  
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## *Foreword*

THE GRAIN BUSINESS may be regarded from two points of view

It may be regarded as an end in itself; with the production and marketing of grain as an ultimate and exclusive objective. It may be looked at without regard for the fact that the daily lives of human beings are wrapped up in every bushel of wheat the soil brings forth. One may be indifferent to the struggles of farm families; the ambitions of farm men; the hopes of farm women; and the aspirations of farm children. The handling of grain may be looked upon as a cold, practical, impersonal process.

On the other hand, one may consider the grain business as a means to an end; rather than as an end in itself. From that viewpoint, the great objective is human contentment. A secure and enjoyable standard of living, productive industry, and adequate compensation for men and women and children; these are the real aims, while commerce in grain is simply a method of achieving the end.

The Wheat Pools of Western Canada have been described as "colossal grain handling organizations". That description is partially correct; but it is notably incomplete and misleading. It is as incomplete and misleading as a description of the Christian Church as "an organization which builds cathedrals".

The aspect of the Wheat Pools which is concerned with the actual physical handling of grain is the commercial side of the coin. It is of great importance. But there is another side of the coin which is even more important in the scheme of things. It is the human side.

A spirited and convincing story of accomplishment can be told about the commercial efficiency of the Wheat Pools; about careful financing; excellent management, and remarkably successful operation of grain elevators. But it is equally true that a fine story of Wheat Pool achievement can be told without emphasizing the commercial activities of the organizations. The services which the Wheat Pools have rendered to the farm families of the Western prairies and to all Canada, aside entirely from the business of actual grain handling, is a story worth telling. It is a human-interest story; a story of action, perseverance and achievement. It is a story of how the farmers of Western Canada, acting in unison and with high determination, have fought vigorously and tenaciously to maintain the standard of living in Canadian prairie homes at a level which reflects honor and credit upon the nation.

In the pages that follow, an effort is made to describe some of the non-commercial interests and activities of the Wheat Pools. The aim is to indicate some of the ways in which the Pool movement has endeavored to smooth out the rough spots of farm life. Because the every-day life of the Wheat Pools is concerned with the collecting of grain at primary points and moving it forward into the channels of commerce, it is virtually impossible to discuss the Pool movement without making some reference to this aspect of its activities. It is intended, however, that these activities shall be regarded as merely the background; as we endeavor to point out the nature of the Pools' other activities, and to suggest the co-operative and public-spirited attitude which the Pools have maintained consistently during the past eleven years.



## Crop Improvement



**R**EVENUE derived from the production of cereal crops controls the standard of living on the average Canadian prairie farm; the character of human shelter, and the quality and quantity of human food and clothing. Revenue from grain production, in turn, is dependent upon marketing prices and the quality of the crop harvested.

From the point of view of the individual farm the first of these revenue factors is mainly external. That is to say, the price per bushel which a farmer may receive for his grain depends chiefly upon circumstances beyond the boundaries of his farm. While farmers acting in a body may affect marketing conditions and practices, the farmer as an individual must accept marketing conditions as they exist.

The second of the revenue factors referred to above, however, is largely an internal one. It is closely related to factors over which the farmer as an individual does have control. It must be admitted, of course, that climatic conditions constitute one factor of importance not controlled by the farmer as an individual. Granting the controlling influence of climatic conditions, however, the nature and quality of crop produced can be affected to a very considerable extent by the farming practices for which the individual farmer is responsible. Thus: farm management and tillage practices have a direct bearing upon the standard of living of every prairie home. To an extent which is not well appreciated, the health, happiness and welfare of rural families is dependent upon the manner in which the soil of each farm is cultivated, and the care and trouble which the farmer is willing to take in the production and handling of his crops.

Because the Wheat Pools are actively aware of the importance of correct farm practices, they have persistently directed their attention and resources toward the encouragement of high quality cereal crop production. This interest of the Pools has been manifested in a variety of directions, and perhaps their outstanding effort is seen in the work they have done among Junior Seed Growers in the three prairie provinces. Each of the provincial Wheat Pools has devoted time and money for the purpose of interesting the boys and girls on prairie farms in the importance of good, clean seed and proper methods of cultivation. This work has been pursued vigorously by the Pools in co-operation with departments of agriculture and provincial universities. It is important to remem-

ber that when the Pools undertook the Junior Co-operative Seed Growers' work the purpose in mind was not to increase the earnings of the Pool Elevator Systems, but rather to familiarize the young people of rural Western Canada with the importance of good seed. Behind this was the direct thought of increased farm revenue and its implications of better living conditions in farm homes. The Pools' attitude is probably best summed up in a motto expounded by the late Sir Horace Plunkett—"Better Farming, Better Business, Better Living".

### MANITOBA

The Manitoba Wheat Pool organization became actively interested in the Junior Co-operative Seed Growers' movement in 1928. Officials of Manitoba Agricultural College, the Dominion Experimental Farms, and the Dominion Seed Branch co-operated wholeheartedly with Pool officials in the movement. The objectives were to determine varieties of wheat best adapted to the soil and climatic conditions prevailing in different areas of the province; to develop a strong interest in the soil among Manitoba boys and girls; to bring young people in direct contact with Manitoba Agricultural College; and to enlarge the general interest in the subject of good, clean seed.

#### *Junior Seed Plots*



At the outset of the plan, Manitoba Wheat Pool undertook to select two young people (between 14 and 24 years of age) from each of its elevator points in the province. One hundred and twenty-four boys and girls were chosen to start the project, and they were supplied with first-class wheat seed without cost. One hundred and six of these initial entrants conduct-

ed plots which scored seventy per cent. or more when they were judged, and these young farmers were awarded registered or certified seed sufficient to sow one acre in the following year. In 1929, there were 273 boys and girls conducting wheat variety plots under the scheme; and another 129 were enrolled under an additional scheme which sought to compile experimental records concerning the effects of commercial fertilizers. A score exceeding seventy per cent. was achieved by 372 of these young Manitobans that year, and they received awards of registered or certified seed. In the following year 226 wheat variety and 132 fertilizer plots were sponsored under the scheme, and 200 entrants received awards of high quality seed.

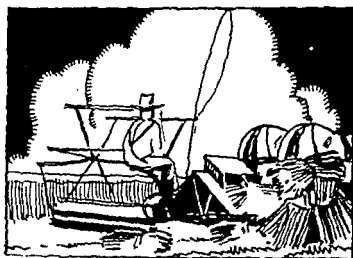
In 1931 only 106 plots were in operation under the scheme, when commercial difficulties compelled the discontinuance of the project.

The net result of these four years of work with the Junior Co-operative Seed Growers were of considerable importance to Manitoba as a grain-growing community, and to the boys and girls as individuals. Province-wide interest was aroused in the subject of pure seed, not only among the young folks but also among thousands of adult farmers who visited the Junior plots and followed their development closely. The annual awards to the young people who were successful in operating their plots meant that thousands of bushels of pure seed were distributed to all parts of the province, and served as foundation stock for supplies of high quality seed in many communities. The records which the boys and girls were required to keep to qualify under the scheme now constitute a valuable survey of wheat varieties suitable for all parts of the province. The natural interest and enthusiasm of the young people made it possible to secure a collection of accurate data which has not been obtainable under any other survey scheme attempted in the province. The records compiled from this work among the Juniors are now regarded as being of inestimable value by department of agriculture officials, and by agricultural technicians of the University of Manitoba.

#### *A Co-operative Project*

It must be remembered that the Junior Co-operative Seed Growers' movement was a co-operative project in which university and government officials participated voluntarily and enthusiastically, while the main inspiration and driving force was supplied by the Manitoba Wheat Pool. Some of the specific contributions which the Pool made were as follows:—selected suitable boys and girls for the tests; supplied seed, containers for seed and fertilizer, shipping bags, record forms and stationery, labels, metal signs, etc.; provided inspectors for continuous field work among the Juniors and for plot judging; supplied secretarial services for contact between the Juniors and the supervising committee; donated annual prizes of registered and certified seed; spent more than \$11,000 in promotional work for the project; and gave extensive publicity to the project over the radio and in the pages of the Pool's official organ "The Scoop Shovel". The fact that the scheme had to be discontinued when the Pool withdrew in 1931 is significant evidence of the part played by that organization in the project.

A large file of letters of appreciation from private individuals and representatives of public bodies testifies as to the importance and community value of the work which was done by the Junior Co-operative Seed Growers in Manitoba. The very definite evidence of these letters and testimonials is to the effect that the work was



not in any sense a promotional effort to advance the commercial welfare of the Pool movement, but a real public service which conferred definite benefits upon the entire community and served in the general direction of improving living conditions on Manitoba farms. A few extracts from some of the letters are worthy of note. A farmer who lives at

Boissevain wrote: "One of my boys, a Junior Co-operator, has sold the seed from the plot he grew last year . . . It netted him \$63.00. This morning he left for the Agricultural College to take a course in Farm Engineering." From Sperling another farmer wrote: ". . . My son, who is one of your Junior Co-operators who received seed grain last spring, received splendid returns from his seed. In payment he is receiving a degree course in Agriculture, having entered the College October 1st". A letter from Professor J. H. Ellis, Soils Division, University of Manitoba, said: "I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Junior Co-operators of the Manitoba Wheat Pool in connection with the fertilizer tests with wheat in Manitoba . . . 11,000 records were obtained. This resulted in an accumulation of data which covered the grain growing portion of Manitoba. Such data would have been difficult to acquire under any other scheme, and it has given us a picture of fertilizer response which it would have been impossible to obtain by work confined to experimental stations and demonstration farms . . . The contributions made by this work are of fundamental value to our knowledge of the response of grain to different fertilizers in Manitoba by the drilling-in method, and it has enabled us to zone the province for the kind of fertilizer requirements. It has also become the basis of our recommendations for fertilizer policies, both to farmers and fertilizer companies".

### *Barley Tests*

During the 1935 crop season Manitoba Pool Elevators Limited is co-operating with the Extension Department of the Manitoba Department of Agriculture, and the University of Manitoba in conducting a barley variety testing project under the auspices of the National Barley Committee. Forty-four young farm men in central and northern Manitoba have been enrolled under the scheme. Each lad is provided with measured quantities of six varieties of barley, together with specific instructions as to the manner of sowing, managing and harvesting. When the grain is harvested it is packed, labelled and shipped to the Department of Agriculture. As a reward for his co-operation in the project, each boy is to be supplied with sufficient high quality barley seed to sow one acre



of land in the Spring of 1936. The purposes of the project are to ascertain the varieties of barley most suitable to various areas in the province, and to check the possibilities of developing a barley trade to meet the requirements of overseas maltsters. It is expected that the project will stimulate the production of better class barley in Manitoba by proving that barley may be regarded as a profitable cash crop when it is properly produced.

### **ALBERTA**

The Alberta Wheat Pool became interested in a junior seed growers' project in 1930, and, in conjunction with the Provincial Department of Agriculture, instituted a scheme similar in purpose to that adopted by the Manitoba Wheat Pool. The Dominion Department of Agriculture, through the provincial Seed Branch, gave invaluable co-operation. Whereas the Manitoba scheme involved the enrollment of individual boys and girls for the development of test plots, the Alberta scheme was built around junior clubs established throughout the province. Representatives of the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Directors of the Alberta Wheat Pool instituted the plan, with the following stated objectives:

1. To improve the quality of crops on members' farms and in their districts.
2. To demonstrate the value of good seed and the value of good tillage practices.
3. To educate Alberta junior farmers in the production and sale of improved seed.
4. To bring together for discussion and demonstrations those interested in production problems and to foster the co-operative spirit through club organization.
5. To develop leadership in community projects.

### *Junior Clubs*

The Alberta plan of experimental plots conducted on a basis of local junior clubs involved testing of oats, barley, alfalfa, corn and potatoes, in addition to the wheat tests. The rules of the scheme require the formal organization of a local junior club with president, vice-president, secretary and club leader, before seed supplies will be distributed. Club membership is open to young men between the ages of 15 and 22 years, and must reside on the farms where the club's test plots are located. Maximum membership in a club is twenty-five, and only one club for each cereal project may be



organized in each district. Each club member may undertake only one cereal plot during his first year of membership. In his second year he may experiment with two cereals and thereafter with three different crops. All the members of each club must use seed of the same variety. Each member of the club pays a nominal entry fee and seed is supplied in bulk to the club. In 1931 junior wheat clubs were formed in fifteen localities, with an aggregate membership of 320 young men. The following year there were 500 youths enrolled in 30 clubs; and 750 boys grew test plots of wheat under the auspices of 45 Junior Seed Growers' Clubs in 1933. In 1934 there were 52 clubs with an enrollment of 758 members; and in 1935 the project had grown to include 62 wheat clubs with 946 members. Each junior farmer is supplied with three ninety-pound sacks of high-quality seed.

Fieldmen engaged by the Provincial Department of Agriculture inspect the plots at least twice during the growing season, and act as judges in the competition. The Alberta Wheat Pool pays a cash prize to the boy in each club whose plot receives the highest rating. Each junior is required to prepare one-bushel samples of threshed grain from his plot for exhibition and competition at a special annual seed fair arranged for the clubs. Winning competitors at the seed fair are awarded cash prizes by the provincial and dominion governments, and selections from the successful exhibits at the club fair are entered in the Annual Provincial Seed Fair, where prizes of considerable value are offered. A number of boys winning the highest marks for field work, exhibiting and judging are given a three-day visit to the Annual Provincial Seed Fair, with all expenses paid. Finally, a team of Alberta Junior Seed Growers is selected each year to participate in the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto, with all expenses paid.

### *Beneficial Results*

The Junior Seed Growers' movement has operated only four years in Alberta, but results of a splendid character can be seen already. The boys who are members of these junior clubs have already produced  $2\frac{1}{4}$  million bushels of exceptionally high quality seed wheat. It has been found that 95 per cent. of the wheat produced from these junior plots has been sold and sown in the community of production, which means that many agricultural communities throughout Alberta have felt beneficial effects from the movement. Department of Agriculture officials, who act as field inspectors for the clubs, report that the quality of general seeding is on a much higher level in localities where Junior Seed Growers' clubs are operating. The benefits derived by club members as individuals are of great importance. Hundreds of keen young men living on Alberta farms receive inspiration and encouragement from their membership in the junior clubs, and their

interest in the soil and what it can produce is stimulated. The stimulation and encouragement which they receive in connection with the use of pure seed leads to a general desire to learn and practise improved methods of farm operation and management. As a result of the junior seed grower club movement, which the Alberta Wheat Pool has fostered and developed in co-operation with the Provincial Department of Agriculture, the on-coming generation of farmers in Alberta will be much better equipped than their fathers to produce high quality field crops, and their farming methods will be soundly built upon the proper appreciation of the vital importance of pure, clean seed.

### SASKATCHEWAN



During the crop year 1929-30, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool became actively engaged in the junior seed growers' movement in co-operation with the Extension Department of the University of Saskatchewan and the Dominion Experimental Farms. The Saskatchewan plan combined the main features of the Manitoba and Alberta schemes. Individual Junior Co-operators were enrolled under a wheat variety testing scheme, with boys and girls from 12 to 18 years of age, each experimenting with six varieties of wheat.

Three hundred and twenty Junior Co-operators were selected, and those gaining a score of seventy per cent. on the year's work were awarded sufficient high-quality seed for an acre of land. The experiment proved an immediate success, and local interest in the scheme exceeded all expectations. A number of the plots were visited by hundreds of interested spectators during the season. This work was carried out in close co-operation with the Dominion Experimental Farms.

### *Pool Co-operated with Others*

The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool was responsible for the selection of the junior competitors and for the supervision of their work. It financed the inspection of plots, attended to the extensive secretarial work connected with the scheme, and supplied labels, signs, etc. The Dominion Experimental Farms sent out the seed, received samples of the harvested grain for examination and judging, and compiled records of the results and scores.

In 1930-31 the encouragement of Saskatchewan rural young people was continued, with 320 Junior Co-operators enrolled under the variety testing scheme, and 45 Junior Grain Clubs operating.

Drought and grasshopper invasion took an extremely heavy toll of Saskatchewan grain clubs that year, and the crops on many of the junior plots were totally destroyed. Some of the plots, which managed to come through the season as a result of extremely careful cultivation by the juniors, produced very disappointing harvest results. However, 206 Junior Co-operators achieved the 70 per cent score and were awarded with seed for an acre-plot.

At the end of this season the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool found it necessary, in view of extremely difficult financial conditions, to discontinue its appropriation for the junior seed growers' activity. In arriving at this decision, the Board of Directors expressed unanimous endorsement of the project, and pledged itself to resume the work as soon as practicable. In 1934 a new start was made on the work among junior seed growers, and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool is now planning full and vigorous development of the work.

During the 1935 crop year, the Pool Board approved a policy by which the Pool could make available to growers, registered seed grain in small quantities at the lowest possible cost. This was accomplished by Pool Elevators buying substantial quantities of registered seed and distributing it in small lots to Pool members. Up to the end of May some 3,500 bushels of first quality registered seed grain had been distributed in this way.

In all this work of crop improvement, it has been the aim of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool to co-operate with existing agencies rather than to create independent organizations. The Department of Extension of the University has done, and is doing, important work in the field of seed betterment. The Pool has furthered these projects, both by providing financial assistance, and by supplying the Junior Grain Clubs with registered seed of wheat, oats and barley.

#### *Barley Project, 1935*

Perhaps the most comprehensive seed project to date is the Barley Variety Testing programme, which is being initiated this year under the auspices of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool in co-operation with the National Barley Committee, the University of Saskatchewan, and the Dominion Experimental Farms. The undertaking is in two sections: Junior and Senior. The Junior section is conducting two test plots in each sub-district, making a total of 320 test plots throughout the province; these plots to be maintained for one year. The Senior section is undertaking 32 test plots, or two to each Wheat Pool district; these plots to be carried on by Senior co-operators over a period of three years.

The aim of this testing programme is to definitely establish the place of barley in the general scheme of cereal production. It is believed that as a result of these experiments, much valuable

information will be obtained for the use of the National Barley Committee. The same varieties are being tested in the one-year and in the three-year programme; but the three-year men are all experienced farmers, many of them nationally known seed-growers and prize-winners.

These plots are designed to test five different varieties of barley. The plots are scientifically laid out, so that the relative position of each variety is changed in each section, and each variety has an equal chance to thrive—thus making possible a fair comparison of yield, grade, hardness, etc.

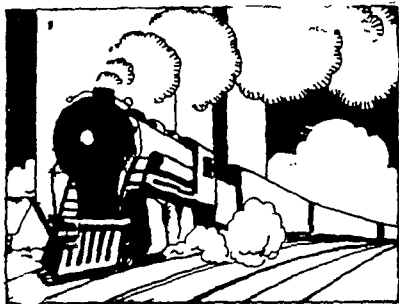
The results to the co-operating farmers in this project will be of real value to them; introducing them to the latest and most scientific methods of variety testing. At the same time, the project is expected to give impetus to the production of barley in the province. It is more than probable that the test will demonstrate where the best types of malting and feed barley can be grown successfully, and will indicate the best varieties to grow in the various parts of each district.

### *Pool Activities Widespread*

Wheat Pool interest in the use of good, clean seed on Western Canada farms has been expressed in numerous ways, and the Pools have co-operated with various groups and organizations devoted to crop improvement. Sub-committees of the Wheat Pools have worked in close harmony with Registered Seed Growers' Associations in each of the western provinces, and with the parent Canadian Seed Growers' Association. Plans developed under the joint auspices of these bodies have resulted in the distribution of many thousands of bushels of good seed wheat which originated from registered stock. The Pools have contributed cash grants toward the promotional work of seed growers' bodies, and have awarded cash prizes for seed entries at fairs and exhibitions. Behind these efforts has been the conviction that the employment of better seed will result in better living conditions on prairie farms.

In 1930 the Central Selling Agency printed and distributed an attractive pamphlet entitled: "Rules and Regulations Governing the Production of Registered Seed of Self-fertilizing Grain Crops". The text of the pamphlet was prepared by the Canadian Seed Growers' Association, Ottawa, and published in the name of that body by the Canadian Wheat Pool. It went into two editions of 5,000 copies each, and was regarded as an important contribution to the good seed campaign.

Many columns of information concerning the use of good seed have been published in the Wheat Pool official organs, and much Pool radio broadcasting time has been devoted to the better seed movement.



Manitoba Pool Elevators pioneered the way in providing grain cleaning equipment in country elevator systems, and the Pool organizations in Alberta and Saskatchewan are adding to their cleaning facilities each year. During the four years, 1929-30 to 1932-33, Manitoba Pool Elevators received 94,000,000 bushels of grain, and of that total 31,900,000 bushels were cleaned at the country elevators. Screenings returned to farmers amounted to 120,000,000 pounds. Freight charges on these screenings, from Manitoba points to the Head of the Lakes, would have cost the farmers nearly a quarter of a million dollars. Thus, Manitoba Pool Elevator patrons saved that amount of freight expense; and 120 million pounds of screenings, valuable for livestock feeding, were kept and used at country points.

Harmonious co-operation with the National Research Council has been another aspect of the Wheat Pools' active interest in crop improvement work. Special studies of rust and smut, by highly trained scientists in the national research organization, and efforts to develop varieties capable of withstanding these ravaging diseases, have received active and practical encouragement from the Wheat Pools. The National Research Council's special investigations into the effects of frost upon the milling and baking qualities of wheat also received hearty co-operation from the Pools.

Not only with reference to wheat, but also in connection with barley and other coarse grain crops, have the Wheat Pools directed their resources in an effort to raise the annual income, and thus the standard of living, of Western Canada farms. The National Barley Committee, an organization embracing all interests concerned with the production and marketing of barley, has received consistent and active co-operation from the provincial Wheat Pools and their central selling agency.

With reference to the subject of crop improvement, it can be said that the Wheat Pools have contributed money, publicity, manpower and inspiration to the movement; because they believe that better crops mean better living for the farm homes of the prairies.

## *Educational Facilities*

**R**UNNING through the Wheat Pool movement there has been an ever-present desire that the members and the organizations should take an active and energetic part in educational matters in Western Canada, with particular emphasis upon the application of co-operative principles to general citizenship. Year after year, Wheat Pool delegates have authorized their Boards of Directors to participate in educational activities, and have contributed funds to support of such projects.

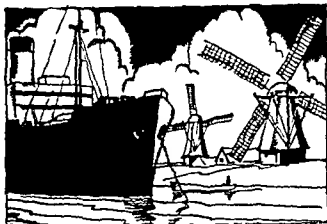
### *Country Meetings*

One influential medium of educational development in Western Canada during the past eleven years has been the Wheat Pool country meeting. Most of the meetings take place in the winter, and they are held, frequently, in the schoolhouse; the logical place for educational pursuits. Collectively, the Wheat Pool meetings represent an attendance of thousands upon thousands of farmers who have travelled thousands of miles across prairie roads and highways. At these meetings one encounters the fullest and most intense study and discussion of prairie farming problems, with particular emphasis placed upon marketing matters. Adult self-education for the development of rural citizenship has been the fruit of these meetings. Although the immediate influence of any one of these meetings may be difficult to determine, there can be no doubt concerning the beneficial cumulative effect. One of the most gratifying features is seen in the keen interest which the younger generation of farm people are taking. Side by side with their fathers, or filling the places which their fathers have left vacant, young farmers are assuming leadership at Wheat Pool meetings and doing their part in the mighty movement which is moulding rural public opinion in the direction of a better and fuller life.

### *Library Service*

One of the most noteworthy adult educational services rendered by the Wheat Pools to the people of Western Canada has been the maintenance of free libraries by the Provincial Pools. Through the facilities of these libraries, good literature has been introduced into hundreds of farm homes which could not otherwise have had access to suitable books. Rural study groups, farm families and individuals in various parts of the province, have enjoyed the advantages of a constant supply of authoritative texts of history, economics, sociology, science, etc., with which the Pool libraries are able to supply them.

In order to encourage the use of books to the greatest extent, and to make library service available to a wide circle of farm families, the Wheat Pools not only refrain from a rental fee for the privilege of borrowing the books, but they also share with the borrower postal delivery charges on books to and from the reader.



The Wheat Pools have always encouraged their members to keep well-informed regarding current affairs of world-wide interest. For that, they believe, is an important part of the business of being a good citizen. Accordingly, official organs of the provincial Wheat Pools have, during the past ten years, devoted a great deal of space to the discussion of public affairs and have encouraged their members to follow and take part in these discussions. Being keenly interested in the art of co-operation, Pool members naturally like to know what is being done along these lines in other countries, and the Pool publications bring to the farmers of Western Canada a constant flow of information regarding the activities of the world-wide Co-operative Movement.

### *Cultural Aspects*

The educational activities of the Pools have not been confined to matters relating to the grain business, but have included a wide range of topics concerned with the ideal of better living. For example: the Pools have taken an active part in advancing the ideals of the League of Nations. Pool radio broadcasts have repeatedly carried the anti-war message to the people of Western Canada. Other radio broadcasts by Pool officials have dealt with the responsibilities of citizenship, with peace propaganda, and with many of the cultural aspects of life.

At the same time, Wheat Pool field service men have taken an active and helpful part in community activities in all parts of Western Canada.

In awarding scholarships and prizes to students and scientists who are grappling with the problems of farm life, the Wheat Pool has made a further contribution to the general good of farm people. With the same aim in view, the Pools have brought to prairie audiences lecturers with expert information and advice concerning co-operative ideals and enterprises.

An ambitious undertaking by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool in the field of education is the establishment of an educational foundation as a Memorial to the late A. J. McPhail, formerly President of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and of the Central Selling Agency. The objectives of this Foundation are set forth as follows:

1. A higher standard of living among the farm homes of Western Canada with a greater share in the comforts of civilization and the utmost opportunity to live a fuller, freer and happier life.



2. The development of a broader appreciation of the principles of co-operation as a means toward this end.
3. The development of the widest possible recognition of the responsibilities of citizenship as between rural and urban dwellers to the end that equality of opportunity may be forthcoming to all classes of citizens in the country.

The methods used in attaining these aims will include essay contests, promotion of study groups among the agricultural population of the province, the award of scholarships and lectureships in Western Canadian Universities; the placing of suitable reading material in Public School Libraries of Western Canada, experimental and research work in agriculture, and nation-wide radio lectures by economists of national and international standing, and the publication of such lectures for popular distribution.

In addition to fostering educational activities of this nature, the Foundation may also be empowered to establish recreation facilities in various parts of the province, where men and women interested in the development of the Co-operative Movement may meet together for the study of questions of common interest to Western rural life and, at the same time, to secure much needed change and recreation.

The full realization of the ambitions of the McPhail Memorial Foundation will be a fitting tribute to the memory of an outstanding Canadian citizen who devoted the best years of his life to the improvement of rural life in Western Canada. In this connection it is interesting to read what this great leader himself had to say about Co-operation some years ago.

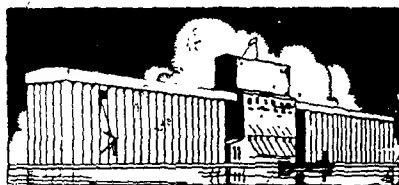
#### *Educating the West in Co-operative Methods*

Extracts from a speech by the late A. J. McPhail on the occasion of the inception of the George Tarbat Memorial Foundation in 1929:

"Co-operation is a combination of the practical and the ideal. It offers ample scope for putting into practice the ideas of the practical man as well as the ideals of the idealist. It is not only the most efficient, economical and practical way of doing business, but, when carried to its ultimate conclusion, it recognizes equality and the interdependence of all human beings. It provides a business medium through which progressive and socially-minded men and women, with high ideals can find satisfaction and peace of mind in useful work. It is revolutionary in that it aims to bring about more equitable distribution of wealth by returning to its members as nearly as possible the full value of the product of their labor.

"Not so long ago, the statement 'competition is the life of trade' was generally accepted. Today it is challenged everywhere. . . . Each day a larger and larger number of men and women awakened to the full significance of the truth that no man can live unto himself.

"If some day we are to have a more ideal state, that state must first live in the minds and hearts of individual men and women. We can talk of changing present conditions by legal enactments, but if there is to be permanent change for good, the change must first take place in the minds of men and women . . . All great movements of the people must have something that will appeal to the imagination of the people. The prospect of greater financial returns alone is not enough. Unselfishness, the spirit of sacrifice, the spirit of fair play, of 'do unto others as you would that they should do unto you', of kindness—these qualities make a great and lasting appeal to the hearts and imaginations of men. Co-operation in its best and truest sense stands for all these."



In 1934, the Co-operative Education Committee of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Board initiated three other major activities of great interest. The first was the making of a special motion-picture film, designed to provide good entertainment, and, at the

same time to convey the message of Co-operation to prairie audiences. The second; the sponsoring of an essay contest for teachers throughout the province on the subject of "Co-operation by the Teacher, in the Community and in the Profession". The third venture was the preparation of a history of the Co-operative Movement in Western Canada, with a view to the possibility of its adoption as a supplementary reader in the schools of the province, or, in a more condensed form, as a text-book on Co-operation. The first two of these projects have been carried out successfully, and the third is now in course of preparation.

The activities mentioned above are only a few illustrations of the persistent efforts which the Wheat Pools have made during the past ten years in the direction of developing the co-operative ideal among Western Canadian people. During this time, all the educational and propaganda facilities at the disposal of the Wheat Pool have been utilized with a view to building up an appreciation of a high standard of living in every Western Canadian home.

## *Grain Research Problems*

THE Wheat Pool organization has always taken a progressive attitude toward grain research and the investigation of market requirements. Close co-operation with the National Research Council, Ottawa, has been a matter of fundamental policy with the Pools. Three investigations undertaken by the National Research Council upon the specific request of the Wheat Pools have been of enormous importance to prairie wheat growers.

At the Pools' request a thorough, scientific inquiry was made into methods of drying damp and tough grades of wheat. As a consequence of this investigation, improved methods of drying were discovered, and reconditioned grain treated by the new process is now acceptable to overseas buyers. Previously, tough and damp grades which had been dried in Canada were subject to heavy discounts in the overseas markets, and there was a serious consequent loss of cash return to the prairie producer.

Another project undertaken by the National Research Council at the request of the Pools was research into the milling qualities of spring-threshed wheat. As a result of this investigation, the inherent qualities of grain which had remained in stock over the winter were definitely established and placed in an acceptable category from the milling standpoint. This meant greatly increased cash returns to the farmer who was compelled to delay threshing until spring.

The Pool also advocated a scientific inquiry to establish the effect of frost on the milling and baking qualities of wheat. This investigation, conducted by scientists of the National Research Council, established facts which were previously unknown and greatly increased the prairie income derived from frosted wheat.

The Pools make a practice of working in close harmony with the Dominion Rust Research Laboratory, Winnipeg, and other organizations investigating plant diseases and related agricultural problems. Pool publications give widespread publicity to the work being done by scientists engaged in the investigation of crop production problems, and the Pools have made cash grants to promote and encourage this type of work.

### *Cereal Research Laboratory*

From the outset of their activities the Wheat Pools recognized the importance of a comprehensive fund of scientific knowledge and information in seeking solutions of the many new problems which constantly arise in the handling and marketing of grain. They also realized that to do this adequately would require a well-co-ordinated programme, extending over a period of several years, of painstaking research by many different types of specialists.

Such a programme could be carried out only by an organization with many highly trained men and much specialized and expensive equipment such as universities possess. On the other hand, by the very nature of their organization, universities are obviously not in a position to take up the immediate study of pressing questions to which quick answers are required by marketing organizations. With these facts in mind, the Canadian Wheat Pool, in 1928, decided to establish a cereal research department.



WHEAT POOL BUILDING - WINNIPEG

In 1929 the Pools invested approximately \$15,000 in the equipment of a grain research laboratory in the Wheat Pool Building at Winnipeg. This laboratory was able to supplement the valuable fund of information amassed by the Universities, the National Research Council, the Government Grain Research Laboratory, and other institutions working on grain research problems in Canada. Special regional studies of protein content of wheat were made, and valuable information was thus placed at the disposal of the Wheat Pools sales staff.

Samples of wheat produced in other parts of the world and shipped to the Liverpool market were secured, and the Pool laboratory conducted an intensive study into the baking qualities of these wheats when combined with given proportions of Canadian wheat. Some research was also carried on with reference to the feeding value of Western Canada barleys. Important work of the Pool laboratory was concerned with making an up-to-the-minute survey of the quality of Canada's wheat crop, including protein surveys early in each crop year, and milling and baking tests throughout the year.

### *Barley-*

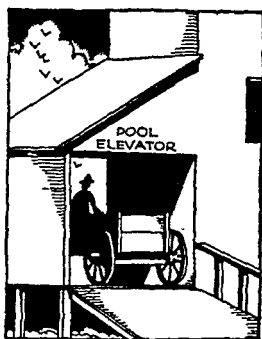
The efforts of the Pools have been directed continually toward improvements in the production and marketing of Western Canadian barley. Under Wheat Pool auspices, P. F. Bredt, President of Manitoba Pool Elevators Ltd., and Professor T. J. Harrison (now Assistant Grain Commissioner), made a trip to Europe and thoroughly investigated the potentialities of that market for Canadian barley. Upon their return they made a comprehensive report which was chiefly instrumental in establishing a new and improved set of barley grades under the Canada Grain Act. Their report also presented information which has placed Canadian producers in a better position to understand the demands and requirements of the overseas market, and to adjust their production to the needs of that market.

Several years ago the Pools opened new territory for Western barley when they established a special office in Eastern Canada and sold more than three million bushels of Western feed barley to livestock producers in Eastern Canada. The Pool's intimate knowledge of the barley situation enabled them to make specific recommendations to the National Research Council with reference to investigations into the qualities and methods of handling barley. At the present time the entire Wheat Pool organization in the three prairie provinces is actively engaged in a barley variety testing programme which is being conducted by the National Barley Committee.

### *Hulled Oats*

Large stocks of wild oats carried to terminal elevators prior to 1930 were a drug on the market, and frequently without a cash value equal to the storage charges. This situation was altered when the Wheat Pools installed hullers in their terminals and opened up an export market for hulled wild oats in Great Britain and the Continent. While this market is now, to a great extent lost, it did for a time provide for Western farmers a considerable revenue on a product which previously was practically unsaleable, and established the fact that a potential demand exists.

### *Grain Handling and Shipping*



Since their inception, the Wheat Pools have worked consistently for improvements in grain handling and shipping methods. Pool delegates and legal advisors are constantly studying the Canada Grain Act and the Canada Shipping Act, and other related statutes with a view to making those enactments more nearly perfect instruments for intelligently controlling the flow of Canada's grain. The farmers of Western Canada have always regarded the Canada Grain Act as a sort of charter designed primarily to protect the interests of the grain producer in the complex machinery of grain marketing. With that thought in mind, the Wheat Pools have been persistent and vigorous advocates of amendments to the Canada Grain Act for the purpose of constantly reforming and improving the grain marketing system. Practically all reforms in grain marketing have been brought about through the insistent demands of the producers. For the past twelve years, the Wheat Pools have been the outstanding spokesmen for the farmers of Western Canada, and their alertness and vigor have resulted in far-reaching amendments to the Act since 1923.

The Pools can modestly claim some credit for the revisions of the Canada Grain Act in 1929 and 1930, which gave increased protection to the interests of the Western Canada farmer-shipper. The Pools were also instrumental in bringing about a re-organization of the Board of Grain Commissioners on a new basis of unquestioned ability and efficiency. Pool patrons and Pool officials feel that they must stand on guard constantly if the producers' rights under the Canada Grain Act are to be fully realized. There is little doubt that if the Pools were to fall down on the job, the Canada Grain Act, as a guarantee of producers' rights, would not receive the attention it has commanded during the past twelve years.

### *Terminal Mixing*

In the campaign to have certain types of mixing in terminal elevators prohibited, the Pools took an active part, although in doing so they were well aware that the organization's earnings would probably suffer reduction. The fact that stringent regulation of mixing was in the best interests of the primary producer was sufficient reason to justify Wheat Pool policy in the matter.

The Wheat Pool organization is largely responsible for present restrictions in terminal mixing of No. 1 Hard, No. 1 Northern, No. 2 Northern, and No. 3 Northern. Closely linked with this is the adoption of the "75-25 export standard" which was supported by the Pools. This means that the outgoing standard from terminals calls for not less than 75% of the average of inspections at primary points, plus 25% of the standard set by the Western Grain Standard Board. The effect of these two reforms was to guarantee to overseas buyers a reliable standard of quality which enabled Canadian wheat to compete more advantageously with other wheats.

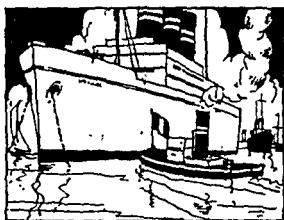
### *Automatic Sampling*

The automatic sampler, which is now a statutory requirement in terminal unloading machinery, was developed and introduced by the Wheat Pools. The installation and experimentation of these automatic samplers was first conducted by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, without support or encouragement from any other organization. The results obtained by the device proved of such direct benefit to farmers who shipped carload quantities of wheat, that the Board of Grain Commissioners made it compulsory equipment for all Canadian terminals.

### *Grading and Checking*

The grading of grain at the primary shipping point and subsequent checking of grades at Winnipeg and Calgary and at terminal points, has always been a matter of extreme importance to prairie producers. In years gone by, it was a source of constant dis-

satisfaction on the part of farmers, who felt that they were unfairly treated in the process of grading and checking. Due to the interest of the Pools in this subject, the grading situation has been vastly improved in the past decade, and there is a constantly growing confidence on the part of producers in the valuation placed on their grain by elevator agents and checking officials. Improvement in grading methods and in checking of grades has meant that prairie farmers have received many millions of dollars which, under earlier conditions, would have gone into the profit accounts of grain-handling concerns.



## *Matters of General Farm Interest*

**B**ECAUSE the Wheat Pools are concerned with the ultimate cash return to the grain farmer, they have devoted much attention to the respective merits of various shipping routes with a view to effecting economies in shipping and handling charges. As a result of their enterprise in this direction, not only have the Pool members benefitted greatly, but non-Pool farmers have shared in the advantages as well. Western Canada agriculture as a whole has shared the reward.

### *Development of Shipping Routes*



The Alberta Wheat Pool has made a painstaking study of the merits of shipping grain across the Rocky Mountains and out of Canadian Pacific ports to overseas markets. It was found that this shipping route could be developed to the advantage of grain producers in the Province of Alberta and some points in Western Saskatchewan, and the Alberta Wheat Pool took the leading part in developing

this Western route. Fifteen years ago not more than a trickle of export grain passed through the Pacific ports of Canada. Today the British Columbia seacoast is one of the most important grain-routing avenues of world commerce.

Similarly, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool has been the chief moving force behind the development of Churchill, Canada's new Hudson Bay port, as an outlet for Western Canada grain. The Central Selling Agency of the Pool provided the original test shipments of 530,000 bushels of wheat, in September, 1931. Since the opening of the port, over 85% of all grain shipments have been supplied by the Pool organization. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool has also been the chief user of the Government terminal at Churchill for winter storage purposes. Shipping interests at first expressed grave doubts concerning the wisdom of operating through the Hudson Bay route, so the Pool took the initiative in the matter and chartered vessels to carry Canadian grain to Europe. In addition, the Pool was instrumental in making possible the first trial shipments of Canadian cattle via Churchill. This Wheat Pool enterprise has proved to a skeptical world that the Hudson Bay route is practical and advantageous, and has resulted in appreciable savings to prairie producers in shipping costs to Europe.



### *Spreads*

Another achievement of the Pool which has been of great benefit to all producers of grain, and not only to patrons of Pool elevators or members of the Pool associations, is the narrowing of spreads between prices for street and car-load lots of grain.

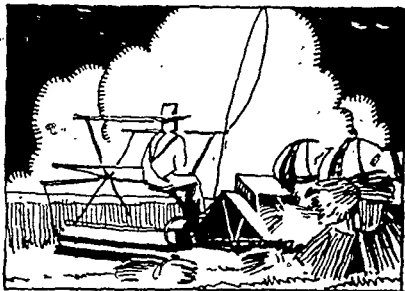
At the present time, the price-spread between wheat delivered to a country elevator in wagon-lots and wheat shipped in carload-lots to terminal elevators is notably narrow. Ten years ago the spread was five or six times as great as it is today in favor of car-load shipments, and hence it was the cause of great annoyance and dissatisfaction to the many thousands of farmers in Western Canada who were compelled to sell wheat in wagon-lots. This narrowing of "street spreads" has been a great boon to Western producers because it means that several additional cents a bushel now reach the pocket of the producer.

The credit for this cash saving to producers can be claimed almost exclusively by the Wheat Pools; for it was their vigorous tackling of the situation and their insistent demands for reform, and the example which they set by their own elevator operations which brought about the improvement.

### *General Farm Problems*

The Pool has consistently taken the attitude that every problem which a considerable number of Western farmers must face is a problem which demands the attention of the Wheat Pool organization. Some years ago it became shockingly evident to the prairie farmers that some system of debt adjustment would have to be devised if the agricultural industry were to survive. The Pools along with other farmer organizations, have been actively concerned with the farm debt problem. When the Western provinces submitted a brief to Ottawa on the debt situation, all three governments selected a Pool representative to serve on the Committee making the investigation and preparing the brief. In the carrying out of the debt adjustment programs, the Pools have co-operated closely with the provincial debt adjustment officials and the government.

The Pools have achieved the position of the most representative spokesman for rural life in Western Canada. It is a role of heavy responsibility and one which demands from Pool delegates and directors careful and intelligent consideration of every matter of major public importance in Canada. In view of this responsibility, Wheat Pool officials



have appeared before government bodies, legislative committees and Royal Commissions, to speak for the farmers of Western Canada on a broad variety of subjects.

Aside from their work on debt adjustment legislation, the Pools have made recommendations concerning, among other things, methods of combating drought conditions, relief problems, banking and credit matters, marketing legislation, and national agricultural policies. There can be no doubt that, if the Pool organization had not been in existence, the rural point of view would not have been expressed adequately in any of these matters.

### *Statistics*

In 1928, the Central Selling Agency of the Pools organized its own statistical department and undertook various projects of statistical research which were considered necessary to a full and intelligent understanding of the world wheat situation. This department established a crop reporting system through Pool elevator agents and local secretaries in the three prairie provinces, and compiled information of unquestioned value to the farmers of Western Canada.

The Department kept a record of crop conditions and yield in all grain-growing countries of the world, and gathered statistics regarding the international movement of wheat.

Unfortunately, this valuable service had to be discontinued in 1931, owing to the Pool's commercial difficulties. At the present time, however, the provincial Pool elevator systems are extending valuable co-operation to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in providing information for the official governmental crop reports. The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool publishes comprehensive weekly crop reports prepared by its own observers and statisticians.

### *Democratic Control*

Because the Wheat Pool organization is clothed in the ideals of the common people, and totally owned and operated by plain, hard-working citizens, it has grown in an atmosphere of internal democracy, with all responsibilities and all privileges being shared equally by the total membership. In order to carry out co-operative practices and to avoid the pitfalls of possible bureaucracy, the Wheat Pools were organized on a basis of grower control and government, and have stood solidly upon that foundation for more than ten years.



In each province members of the Wheat Pools or Pool elevator associations are grouped in sub-districts or locals, and each of these local units elects a delegate annually. These delegates meet in convention by districts and elect a board of directors, each member of the Board being directly responsible to the delegates from the district which he represents. At an annual convention the assembled delegates, directly representing the total membership, review annual reports

and statements, study the affairs of the organization and formulate policies. Administrative powers are delegated to the Board of Directors, and the Board exercises immediate control over officials and employees; but there is a direct, unbroken channel of control and responsibility linking every activity of the organization with the membership at large.

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Regardless of how nearly perfect, in theory, a democratic system may be, there always persists the problem of developing and maintaining an adequate sense of responsibility among the rank and file. The Pools have recognized this problem and have endeavored to meet it through the medium of a well-informed membership. They have sought to keep their members constantly informed, with reference to the policies and operations of their institutions by encouraging community discussions, by the publication of frequent and exhaustive reports, and by periodical publications and radio broadcasting.

The mere act of becoming a patron of the Wheat Pool, or of any other co-operative institution, cannot turn an individualist into a co-operator, and the Pools have never overlooked this fact. They have realized that Co-operation, as a manner of living, must be studied and taught; and for that reason they have conducted a vigorous internal campaign of co-operative education.

## *Development of the Co-operative Ideal*

THE Pools have also realized that it is not enough merely to give their members a practical training in the operations of the particular co-operative enterprise to which they belong, although that is an important first step. A true Co-operator must have a broader basis of knowledge on which to rest his co-operative faith. He should know the history of the Co-operative Movement, and the conditions out of which it arose. He should be equipped with a working knowledge of the principles of economics and political science. The program of co-operative education on which the Pools have been actively engaged over a period of years has been carefully planned along such lines.

The methods used in conducting educational activities have varied in different provinces and localities. The mediums employed have included the press, the radio, summer schools, free libraries, and printed pamphlets mailed direct to the individual members. But in the final analysis the objective of a well-informed, loyal and eager membership has been uniform and continuous.

### *International Co-operation*



In the broad field of international co-operation the Wheat Pools of Western Canada have taken an active part. For some years the Wheat Pools have been the major force in Canada persistently advocating international co-operation between exporting and importing countries to meet the world wheat problem. They believe that the countries concerned should get together and apply intelligent, broad-minded remedies which take into account world-wide conditions, and are not based upon the sacrifice of producers or consumers in any one country.

In pursuance of this policy, the Wheat Pools participated conspicuously in three international Wheat Pool conferences. The first was held at St. Paul, Minnesota in 1926; the second at Kansas City in 1927; and the third at Regina, Saskatchewan, in June, 1928, when the Canadian Wheat Pools acted as hosts to delegates from various states of the American Union, from Great Britain, from Australia, and from Soviet Russia. The primary aim of these International Wheat Pool conferences was to facilitate the exchange of co-operative experience and the promotion of co-operative desire and intention.

The Canadian Wheat Pool was also represented at the World's Grain Exhibition and Conference held in Regina in 1933, when two of the chief speakers were L. C. Brouillette, President of the Sask-

atchewan Wheat Pool, and Lew Hutchinson, of the Alberta Wheat Pool, who dealt with "Co-operative Development in Grain Marketing" and "The Place of Co-operatives in Grain Marketing", respectively.

The Pool strongly supported the principle of international co-operation underlying the London Wheat Agreement, because that document tried to apply intelligent co-operative direction to a situation which had been ruled until then only by haphazard, cut-throat methods. In this connection, the Pools co-operated solidly and enthusiastically with the Dominion government's effort to stabilize wheat prices in Canada and to work in harmony with the other wheat-producing countries of the world.

It is no exaggeration to say that a great many of the co-operative advances and marketing legislation reforms brought about in other countries in the past few years owe their inspiration to the Canadian example. To quote from an address by Dr. Harald S. Patton, Professor of Economics, Michigan State College:

"Visitors from all parts of the world—governmental, agricultural, academic and journalistic—are continually visiting the headquarters of the Canadian Pool to study its organization and methods and their applicability to the conditions of their own countries. Thus, in seeking to work out their own economic salvation by co-operative self-help, the grain growers of the Canadian prairies have built up an institution . . . which stands as an inspiration to farmers of other lands".

## Conclusion

THROUGHOUT more than a decade the Pools have done more for Western Canada than merely handle grain. To refer in detail to all the projects which have been initiated or supported by the Wheat Pools with a view to the general improvement of living conditions on Western Canada's prairies would require far more space than is available in this simple document.

Perhaps a suitable final picture of these public service efforts can be seen in a rapid perusal of the pages of the Minute Book of any one of the Wheat Pool organizations. Naturally, these pages are replete with references to decisions concerning grain handling, payments to producers and general financing. But they are also studded throughout with references to Pool activities not directly concerned with the business of a grain-handling organization. Here, for instance, we find a resolution urging the federal government to undertake certain matters of agricultural research. Another page brings forth a motion to proceed with the installation of automatic samplers. Several pages further on is a decision to grant cash honorariums to grain research workers. Another page shows the Pool asking for the establishment of a co-operative marketing branch under the Dominion Department of Agriculture. Here we find authorization for a cash prize to the winner of the world wheat championship at the Chicago Hay and Grain Exhibition. Here we find the record of correspondence with the Department of Trade and Commerce concerning Old Country publicity to increase the sale of Canadian wheat and flour. This page provides the cash for National Research Council scholarships. That page shows the Pool in conference with a provincial cabinet in connection with debt adjustment matters. Another page shows a minute providing funds for seed improvement work. Another minute continues the educational work among boys' and girls' clubs; or provides for an extension of library facilities to farm homes.

The story runs constantly through the recorded official history of the Wheat Pool movement in Western Canada. It is a story of enterprise, of energy and of encouragement; directed unflinchingly toward measures and pursuits which will result in a broader and happier life for those faithful and hardy farm families who are the rock upon which the nation is built.

